

Hammond



County of Los Angeles CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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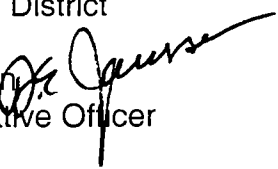
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Third District

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MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

February 22, 2005

To: Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor, Fifth District

From: David E. Janssen 
Chief Administrative Officer

"NOT EVEN FOR A MINUTE" CAMPAIGN

On July 15, 2003, following the deaths of two young brothers, as a result of heat exposure after being left unattended for several hours in a motor vehicle by their foster mother, the Board acted on a motion that you authored directing my office to coordinate with all County departments to create and implement a public awareness campaign. The goal of this campaign was to engage and encourage the public to be observant and aware of any children left in motor vehicles in parking lots and on the streets and to notify law enforcement or emergency services whenever they witness this crime.

Building on a joint public awareness campaign called "Not Even for a Minute" sponsored by the Glendale Sunshine Rotary Club and the Los Angeles County Medical Alliance, my office coordinated an effort to increase public awareness about the dangers of leaving children unattended in or around vehicles. Specifically, the Service Integration Branch (SIB) worked closely with Raine Ritchey of your office and entered into a collaborative effort with the City Attorney's Office and the Sheriff's Department who generously printed the campaign materials free of charge.

The intent of the campaign was to increase public awareness through dissemination of posters, brochures, car decals, and information about "Kaitlyn's Law," legislation enacted in January 2002, which makes it a crime to leave young children alone in a motor vehicle.

Following your August 12, 2004 press conference marking the official beginning of this campaign, SIB worked with your office to distribute "Not Even for a Minute" posters to the health and human services departments and requested their assistance with ensuring this issue was brought to the attention of their clients and the posters displayed. In addition, posters were distributed to approximately 4,000 Los Angeles County child care centers to expand awareness of this critical issue.

Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich
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Since the enactment of Kaitlyn's Law, approximately \$20,000 in fines have been levied and collected in Los Angeles County from situations where individuals have been found to be in violation of the Law. These monies will be utilized to further enhance public awareness of this campaign.

The Department of Health Services (DHS) has several Public Health programs that incorporate educational information into their materials to warn parents and expectant parents about the dangers of leaving unattended children in motor vehicles. DHS has, therefore, agreed it would be optimal for Public Health to assume leadership over the ongoing efforts to promote this important child safety and health issue.

In order to provide for an orderly transition, my staff recently participated in a meeting with Public Health staff from Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health (MCAH) Programs; Injury and Violence Prevention Programs; Health Assessment and Epidemiology, and Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect to provide the background on this campaign. During this discussion, several expansion ideas were identified. Public Health staff will develop a brief proposal for utilizing the \$20,000.

Effective immediately, the responsibility for this campaign is formally transferred to the Department of Health Services, Public Health. Cynthia Harding, MPH, Director of MCAH Programs will be the primary contact. Ms. Harding can be contacted at, (213) 639-6400, e-mail charding@dhs.co.la.ca.us. Your Children's Deputy, Jana Cooley, was recently briefed about this campaign and was also informed that leadership would transfer to DHS.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff on this important campaign and confident that under the leadership of Ms. Harding and her colleagues in Public Health, that public awareness about this child safety issue will be greatly enhanced.

If you have any questions, you may call me or your staff may contact Lari Sheehan, Assistant Administrative Officer, Service Integration Branch, at (213) 893-2477.

DJ:LS:KS

c: Thomas Garthwaite, M.D.
Jonathan Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.